

Hearings *Robert F. Kennedy*

INVESTIGATION OF THE ASSASSINATION
OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

APPENDIX TO
HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS
OF THE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION
VOLUME VII
MEDICAL AND FIREARMS EVIDENCE

MARCH 1979

Printed for the use of the Select Committee on Assassinations

EVALUATION OF THE MEDICAL, PATHOLOGICAL AND
RELATED EVIDENCE PERTAINING TO THE DEATH OF
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

(BY THE FORENSIC PATHOLOGY PANEL)

Michael M. Baden, M.D., Chairman of the Panel, Chief Medical Examiner, New York City, N.Y.
John I. Coe, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Hennepin County, Minn.
Joseph H. Davis, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Dade County, Miami, Fla.
George S. Loggans, M.D., Director, Institute of Forensic Sciences, Oakland, Calif.
Charles S. Petty, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner, Dallas County, Dallas, Tex.
Earl F. Rose, M.D., LL.B., Professor of Pathology, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
Werner V. Spitz, M.D., Medical Examiner, Detroit, Mich.
Cyril H. Wecht, M.D., J.D., Coroner, Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, Pa.
James T. Weston, M.D., Chief Medical Investigator, School of Medicine, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, N. Mex.

sheet primarily to assist in the preparation of the final report and was not necessarily an exact representation of the wound. The majority of the panel agrees that if the wound were located as low as represented on the worksheet, it probably would have penetrated and collapsed the right lung, an effect that would have been apparent on the initial chest X-ray.

Exit (outshoot) wound of the anterior (front) neck:

1. Clothing—shirt (front)

(252) Examination of the shirt reveals a slit-like defect in the upper left front portion, 1.4 centimeters below the topmost buttonhole. This defect measures 1.4 centimeters in length, with its long axis parallel to the long axis of the body. There is a corresponding slit-like defect 1.5 centimeters below the center of the button on the right. This defect measures 1.5 centimeters in length and is also parallel to the long axis of the body (See fig. 3, a photograph of the shirt.)

2. Clothing—Necktie

(253) Examination of the necktie in the normal knotted position reveals a linear defect along the left lateral margin of the knot. This defect measures 0.7 by 0.4 centimeter and involves only the outer facing of the tie. The lining is not altered.

(254) These clothing changes were characterized in initial examination by the FBI laboratory:

A ragged, slit-like hole approximately one-half inch in length is located in the front of the shirt seven eighths inch below the collar button. This hole is through both the button and buttonhole portions of the shirt due to the overlap. This hole has the characteristics of an exit hole for a projectile. No bullet metal was found in the fabric surrounding the hole in the front of the shirt. A small elongated nick was located in the left side of the knot of the tie, Q24 (FBI designation), which may have been caused by the projectile after it had passed through the front of the shirt. (2) (See fig. 7, a photo-

graph of the tie.) X-ray and other examinations of the clothing revealed no additional evidence of value.

(255) In the correspondence from Hoover to Rankin, referred to earlier, Hoover further characterized the defect in the shirt:

The hole in the front of the shirt was a ragged, slit-like hole and the ends of the torn threads around the hole were bent outward. These characteristics are typical of an exit hole for a projectile. A small elongated nick was present in the left

side of the knot of the tie. This nick may have been caused by the projectile after it passed through the front of the shirt. No additional observations relative to the nick could be made due to the characteristics of the nick. (10).

(256) While the FBI laboratory's initial description did not offer evidence concerning the direction of the fibers, the observations in this letter were substantive evidence of the direction of the penetration, provided that the position of the threads had not changed in the interim. As stated previously, the panel itself cannot assess evidentiary significance to the fiber direction because of the numerous intervening examinations.